



Fishing Expedition Evangelism Program Outline

- Direct mail advertisement inviting the community to your Christmas Eve Services. Send out at the latest immediately after Thanksgiving Weekend.
- Announce at all Christmas Eve Services that you will start a special sermon series the second Sunday of January.
- Send out postcards about this sermon series and provide cards for your members to hand out to un-churched friends. One of these postcards should be in every Christmas Eve bulletin.
- Preach a 3 to 6 week series of sermons (non-lectionary) designed to attract non-religious and nominally religious persons to your worship services.
- Go through the same process again using Easter morning services as the kickoff for a second fishing expedition series to start the second Sunday after Easter.
- Develop a follow-up plan to respond to every visitor who attends during the fishing expedition series.



Fishing Expedition Grant

The Northern Virginia Board of Missions is pleased to offer grants to support *fishing expeditions* in our local churches and communities.

These grants are intended to support the production and mailing of professionally produced postcards (or door hangers) within the communities of our churches. This publicity is intended to support your church's evangelism and outreach efforts within the community. Postcards should serve as invitations to your Christmas and Easter services, as well as an invitation to return to your church for a series of sermons that proclaim the gospel in a way that is relevant to your community.

These sermon series should be developed in keeping with the guidelines and ideas in Adam Hamilton's book *Unleashing the Word*. It is expected that the pastor of your church has read this book. These sermon series should be creative, innovative and address the needs of your community.

Publicity for these sermon series can take many forms in addition to the postcards. This could include bulletin inserts, banners, church signs, door hangers distributed by church members, and other methods that arise from the creativity of your members.

Designing, printing and mailing postcards to 10,000 households' costs approximately \$1,800. To do this twice in a year (Christmas and Easter), churches should budget \$3,600. Clergy colleagues on the Arlington and Alexandria district can offer guidance on how mail might be better targeted and on how to reduce costs by driving postcards to multiple post offices. Contact the district office for more information on local resources. Congregation members should be invited to participate in this ministry by distributing postcards to friends and neighbors. They may also wish to sponsor the mailing of postcards by making a special contribution or by donating stamps.

This Fishing Expedition program is not an end unto itself. It is simply a tool for churches to use to be faithful to our call to go out into the world making disciples in the name of Jesus Christ. Churches who apply for Fishing Expedition grants are expected not just to carry out the letter of this program, but to live out its spirit, by engaging in evangelism, hospitality and discipleship ministries. The purpose of this program is not to increase numbers but to increase the church's connection with the community and vitality within the congregation.

Priority will be given to churches of limited financial means, churches who can demonstrate significant lay involvement, enthusiasm for this ministry, and churches that would not be able to do this ministry without assistance. It is our hope that the more financially stable churches of the districts will find ways to finance this ministry on their own. If finances or resources are an obstacle, please contact the district program coordinator for assistance.

Completed Grant Applications are due in the District Office by September 15, 2010

Fishing Expedition Grant Application 2010-2011

Church name: _____

Pastor (s): _____

Lay Leadership Participating in this Project:

_____ position: _____

_____ position: _____

_____ position: _____

_____ position: _____

_____ position: _____

Average worship attendance: 2009 _____ 2008 _____ 2007 _____ 2006 _____

Average Christmas Eve attendance: 2009 _____ 2008 _____ 2007 _____ 2006 _____

Average Easter attendance: 2009 _____ 2008 _____ 2007 _____ 2006 _____

What is your church's budget for evangelism and advertising in 2010? _____

What do you project it to be for 2011? _____

What % of the District Board of Mission apportionment was paid in 2009 _____ and 2008 _____?

Is the district superintendent **and** district program coordinator on your church mailing list for postcards and newsletters? yes
no

Has your church already begun the Fishing Expedition process? yes no

Has your church previously engaged in a Fishing Expedition? yes no

If yes, please describe below:

What are your plans for Fishing Expeditions for Christmas 2010 and Easter 2011? The more details you can provide the better – what will the series be called, why do you feel it is of interest to your community, who in the church will be helping with publicity, hospitality, etc... (Attach additional pages and documentation as needed)

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Church Name: _____

How has the laity of the church been involved in the planning of this ministry? How will they be involved in carrying it out?
(prayer chains, small group studies, hospitality efforts, evangelism training, church clean up, worship planning, etc.)

Please attach your expected budget for this advertising project. How do you plan to spend Church funds? How do you plan to use Grant money?